

VERMONT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Edgewater Room, Lake Morey Conference Center, Fairlee
June 22-23, 2009

*Creating a Statewide System of School Support to Improve Learning for all
Vermont Children*

Approved Minutes – June 22-23, 2009

Present: Board Members: Tom James, Chair; Ruth Stokes, Vice-chair; Tess Savage; Kathy Larsen; Brian Vachon; John Hall; Fayneese Miller; Don Collins

DOE Staff: Armando Vilaseca, Bill Talbott, Rae Ann Knopf, Bill Romond, Carol King, Gail Taylor; Karin Edwards, Kerry Garber, Lisa Gauvin, Pat Fitzsimmons, Tom Alderman, Marta Cambra, John Turner; Mark Oettinger

Others: Ray Proulx; Matt Zarro, College Board

Preliminaries

Item A: Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

Tom James, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m., and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item B: Roll Call and Introductions

Chair James and Board members introduced themselves, as did others in attendance.

Item C: Announcements, Board Member Updates

Tom James reported that he met on June 9 with Dave Coriell, Governor Douglas' education liaison, and that he attended the Leadership Conference at Capitol Plaza on the same day. On June 11, he went to a 1st-grade classroom at the Morristown Elementary School to hear first-graders talk about their study of mammals. Kathy Larsen noted that it is always interesting to hear stories from primary school children.

Tess Savage spoke about the May 29 Vermont Youth Leadership conference she attended with Commissioner Vilaseca. This is a project among small rural schools that focuses on excellence and involvement of students in their education.

Item D: Public to be Heard

No one was signed up to speak at that time.

Item E: April Monthly Report (Tom James, Chair)

Chair James reminded the audience that this monthly communication tool is designed to keep everyone better informed to the work going on at the Board meetings.

Deputy Commissioner for Transformation Bill Romond noted that South Burlington High School is implementing a version of the MET school (Rhode Island); that there are several Rowland Foundation fellowships to teachers focusing on transformation (\$50,000 to teachers; \$50,000 to the school) in the state.

Fayneese Miller noted that caution should be taken when thinking about adopting models that don't have an evaluation process in place. She said that alternative programs need to have an evaluation component and that students need to be ready for the next step(s) in their life.

Item F: Commissioner's Update (Armando Vilaseca)

Commissioner Vilaseca reported that he has had a busy few weeks and has continued his effort to meet with schools around the state (Windham Southwest, Windham Central, and Orange Southwest). Discussions are focusing on topics he is raising: consolidation, especially with respect to small schools; public school choice for all 9-12 students; and, equity in use of dollars.

Kathy Larsen noted the editorial in her local newspaper following his visit: not that small schools would disappear, but school choice might leave small schools with bare bones programs. Fayneese Miller shared her thoughts about students having the choice to go to school where the educational breadth of programs is broader. Is it better for the student to go there? Will it be a problem for the small school not being able to offer the programs that students need? And what about students who cannot or are not able to travel? John Hall noted that small schools can benefit by attracting students who want the small school experience and by offering specialized programs. Brian Vachon wondered if it is an issue of not being able to *afford* travel to the larger school or if it is an issue of the local district not being able to provide transportation. Larsen noted concerns in her areas about asking kids to travel 45 minutes in good weather, let alone the time needed in inclement weather. Vilaseca concluded the conversation by saying that there are benefits; the consolidation discussion should be considered in "baby steps"; and that we need to consistently make sure to understand the unintended consequences of actions being taken.

Vilaseca mentioned the study group referenced in House Bill 441 charged with studying education funding, noting that it will be a challenge to get that work done in six meetings. Tom James suggested that the work of the Council on Education Governance could be helpful, as well as a review of Bruce Richardson's dissertation on governance. Ruth Stokes asked if there was a plan to pull together previous work that could assist with this discussion.

Vilaseca noted that he had met with Peter Herman, President of VSBA, and discussed consolidation.

Vilaseca reported on the June 19th meeting with other New England commissioners regarding the federal *Race to the Top (RTTT)* application. He also reported that he will be attending the annual CCSSO meeting in Colorado in July where there will be a broader discussion with multiple states (40 possibly) on *RTTT*. Regarding the reference in the *RTTT* language on charter schools, current statutes may allow for Vermont to be able to participate without actual charter school language. The Policy Commission work will have an impact on this discussion as well as it may be making recommendations about rules/statutes that need to change to provide the flexibility needed.

Vilaseca met with Chinese government education ministers regarding educators from China in Vermont and vice versa. Fayneese Miller referenced UVM's China Program. James questioned whether or not the SBE needed to do anything to assist with having Chinese educators in Vermont schools.

Item G: Legislative Update (Armando Vilaseca, Mark Oettinger)

General Counsel Mark Oettinger noted the following: 1) changes to the state-placed student law, 2) the provision for payments by small schools for tuition - parent appeal to commissioner instead of local school board; 3) H.441 (budget bill) includes a retirement incentive (teacher retirement).

Item H: FY 2009 & 2010 Budget/ARRA (Stimulus) Update (Armando Vilaseca, Rae Ann Knopf, Bill Talbott)

Bill Talbott reported that budget discussions for FY 2010 are still in flux and department financial staff are currently swamped with end of the year closure activities. The budget bill provides four new positions to work with ARRA, as well as a new special education attorney, and a position to assist with the implementation of new requirements on background checks as required in Act 1 of 2008. He expressed hope, but not promise, as to whether or not there would be additional staff reductions. Fayneese Miller asked whether or not recent reductions included full programs. Talbott responded that, at this point, there is nothing that the Department has actually stopped doing, that work is being divided up among remaining staff, and that the Department is in the middle of some internal work to address reduced capacity. James and Larsen noted this as considerations for the upcoming strategic planning process.

Rae Ann Knopf distributed an update on the current status of ARRA:

- Ed Stabilization Application to be submitted this week;
 - Schools can bond interest free (for the construction bonding piece); this is a limited amount that can be spread out over the state, especially in light of moratorium on construction aid;
 - ARRA guidance is still evolving;
 - \$350 M to be used for national assessment development, and the application has to address all 4 assurances;
 - Guidance is out for the Teacher Quality enhancement grant which has to be a cooperative application between a local district(s) and an institution of higher education; and
 - A proposal for the longitudinal data system is in the development stage.
-

Action Items

Item I: Consent Agenda

James reiterated that the goal of the consent agenda is to reduce lengthy discussions on different topics. Any Board member can request that an item be pulled for separate discussion.

Motion: Tess Savage moved, Kathy Larsen seconded, to approve the consent agenda with comment. Larsen requested additional information on whether or not supervisory union technology plans will be expected to meet those standards. Bill Romond indicated that by the Board endorsing those standards, they could be used as a benchmark for supervisory unions in their planning process. Tom James noted the number of AYP schools and Larsen asked how the random sampling was to be achieved. Gail Taylor responded that the section of the School Quality Standards requiring that process is the area that is being waived (consent agenda item). Larsen also wanted to know if the Special Education rules were really 300 pages long. Karin Edwards responded that when they are finalized the rules will not be of such length – the version sent to the Board contained all the changes, thus the length.

The motion was approved unanimously (8-0).

1. **Minutes of May 19, 2009 SBE Meeting**
2. **Capital Construction** (Cathy Hilgendorf, Cassandra Ryan)

| Project No. | Town School District | Award |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| C-488 | Stowe Town School District | \$180,214.05 |
| C-506 | Newport Town School District | \$280,171.55 |
3. **Independent School Approval** (Pat Pallas Gray, Kerry Garber)
 - >Renewal of general independent school approval:
Rock Point School, Burlington; grades 9-12
 - >Initial general independent school approval:
Rutland Area Christian School, Rutland; grades K-12
 - >Independent school amendment:
The New School of Montpelier, Montpelier; adding ages 8 & 9
4. **Renewal of Post Secondary Certificate of Approval (5 Years) - Antioch University New England** (Laura Glass; Kerry Garber)
5. **School Quality Standards Rule 2122 Waiver** (Armando Vilaseca; Gail; Taylor)
6. **Special Education Rules Revisions: Initiation of the Rulemaking Process** (Karin Edwards; Troy McAllister)
7. **Endorsement of National Education Technology Standards** (Peter Drescher)
8. **Commissioner's Required Actions (schools in years 3-5 of corrective action)** (Gail Taylor; Kathy Blanchard; Pat Johnson; Tina Muncy; Lisa Lovelette)
 - a) Barre City Elementary and Middle School
 - b) Edmunds Middle School
 - c) Lyndon Town School
 - d) Milton Elementary School
 - e) Missisquoi Valley Union HS
 - f) Mt Anthony Union Middle School
 - g) Mt Anthony Union High School
 - h) Rutland Intermediate School
 - i) Rutland High School
 - j) St. Albans City School
 - k) St. Johnsbury Elementary School
9. **Co-Teaching Waiver Request (Rule 2366.2.1 (1) (a) 7 (b))** (Karin Edwards, Rae Ann Knopf)
10. **Rule 2350 Waiver Request: Permission for the Commissioner to approve an alternate plan for provision of driver education (Spaulding High School)** (Armando Vilaseca, Mark Oettinger, Lindsay Townsend)
11. **Ed-Flex Waiver Request: Washington West Supervisory Union** (David Baroudi)

Discussion Items

Item J: Linda Darling-Hammond Video

Board members viewed two sections of a recent video session between national education leader Linda Darling-Hammond and the Education Transformation Policy Commission (on June 8, 2009).

Bill Romond noted the work of DOE staff member Arlyn Bruccoli in getting this ready for the Board to view, as well as the work of Kay Charron on connecting with Linda Darling-Hammond and facilitating her discussion with the Policy Commission.

Ruth Stokes remarked that she was struck with the congruence between Hammond's remarks with what is going on in Vermont, and that is nice to see that validated.

Don Collins reported that recent Policy Commission sub-committee conversation reveals that there are pockets of this work going on in Vermont.

Commissioner Vilaseca commented on his recent field memo regarding the scheduling of parent-teacher conferences.

Bill Romond and others commented on the progress between the August 2007 conversation vs. conversation now, especially with respect to the depth of understanding of issues and clarity in thinking.

Recognition

Tess Savage - This meeting is the last for senior student member Tess Savage who has been on the Board for two years. Savage remarked about how far the Board had progressed with its Transformation initiative since she became a member in 2007, and noted how thrilled she was to have been a part of that evolution.

Bill Romond – This is the final meeting for retiring deputy commissioner Bill Romond. Bill has been with the department for eight years, but has worked in the field of education for 41 years. Chair James presented Romond with a resolution adopted in his honor (see text attached). Romond reflected on his experience in 1985 teaching in an interdisciplinary program and how that changed his view about teaching and learning.

The Board broke for lunch at 12:10 p.m. The meeting was called back to order at 12:54 p.m.

Item K: Annual Planning Meeting (Facilitated by Ray Proulx)

Facilitator Ray Proulx reviewed the expectations for the annual planning meeting:

- *Primary Purpose: Prepare for and set direction for developing the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan*
- *Advance the Transformation of Education in Vermont*
- *Gain understanding of the current state of Vermont education systems and initiatives in relationship with the State Board mission and vision*
- *Gain common understanding of the impact of the 2004-2009 Strategic Plan*
- *State Board members and Department leadership get to know one another and build on working relationships*
- *Other*

*Don Collins suggested: Document developed to be used for interacting with the Governor's Office and Legislature – How to move forward with that?

K1: Establishing the Context (Current State)

The Board, joined by Department of Education leadership team members, brainstormed significant events/initiatives over the past five years (since the 2004 strategic planning process):

- *Policy Commission work
- *Economic Downturn

- *Identification of achievement gap
- *Stimulus \$\$ (Challenges & Opportunities)
- *Field looking for guidance/leadership from DOE
- *Current legislation – 4 positions dedicated to help schools spend \$ effectively (O- gained capacity)
- *Reallocation of funds
- *Doors open for new discussion & new ideas that connect/leverage the Transformation initiative
- *The role of the Legislature
- *“High Schools on the Move” document
- *Transformation is an evolutionary process (Moving from “What” to “How”)
- *“Transformation has legs”
- *Summit Leadership meeting outcomes
- *Commissioner outreach
- *DOE invested in Transformation
- *Education community is calling for action = positive sign
- *Transformation cannot be mandated – it needs to come from the bottom up
- *DOE in last 30 days – positioned well for engaging in the RTTT: engaged in Transformative effort (vs. other states)
- *Need to sustain resources over time
- *Tri-State Collaborative to Multi-state
- *We have a new global context for Transformation
- *Need to engage public (taxpayers) & teachers:
 - Teachers must have “ownership”;
 - People do not know about what we have done & what the process has been;
 - There are many (numerous) teachers already involved & performing T;
 - Teachers are anxious to converse about “this”;
 - Different messages from VTNEA leadership vs. field;
 - Teachers have not had opportunity to understand personal/professional impact;
- *Parents of young children/all parents need to be viewed as valuable allies;
- *We have had the “same people” at the table – need new players & need to expand base – “cast a broader net”
- *Designate & empower champion(s):
 - who are they?
 - Students and community will put the real legs on this initiative
 - Parents (caution) - What does T mean for my student? - (affluent parents)
 - VPA project on school improvement issues (report); 2 years (structure in place)
- *Use 21st C tools for communication
- *18% of people have students in school (in Vermont)
- *Governance & sub-structures
 - Calendar
 - Bus Ed Alliance Report
- *Capacity of DOE
- *VTNEA Survey of Teachers (survey of 6,000 teachers and para-educators re: working conditions)

Brief overview of Title 16, Section 180 (Armando Vilaseca)

See: <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/statutes/fullsection.cfm?Title=16&Chapter=003&Section=00180>

Commissioner Vilaseca provided a brief overview of the statute requiring a Strategic Plan. Ultimately the plan's goal is to assist school boards in improving student learning.

Sharing a snapshot of advancements realized through implementation of the 2004-09 Strategic Plan (Ruth Stokes)

Vice Chair Ruth Stokes reviewed the 2004-09 focus strategies established by the Board to guide its work and that of the department, noting the following:

- 04-05: Goal A - HSOM, NECAP; early childhood education;
- 06-07: Role of the Profession Standards Board – resulted with autonomous VSBPE
 - English Language proficiency standards
 - Analysis of performance data at different levels
- 05-06: Goal B: high quality leadership
 - Board self assessment process and roles and responsibilities defined
 - VELC work
- 06-07: Further public engagement – development of a monthly board summary; “Public to be heard” added as an agenda item for each month
- 06-07: Governance – white paper released; public engagement meetings around the state; governance topic/discussion is still on the table with Transformation; focus on providing quality education and opportunity for students
- Goal C: Youth Behavior work; school safety and environment standards
- Goal D: Department capacity
 - Building capacity to support statewide needs
 - Reallocating staff; program work; focus of work on students and student achievement
- Goal E: effective use of resources
 - Budget development process in place
 - Statewide calendar – work but no resolution
 - Models of technology integration – focus that lead to outcomes
 - Engaging the Vermont community – DVD on school finance; forums and information developed to educate taxpayers
- Summary: Focus Strategies related back to Strategic Plan
 - Future Goals/Strategies/Objectives need to be less in number;
 - Review focus strategies each year as a model

Share response to request for input from partnering organizations (Tom James)

At the end of May, Chair James sent a letter on behalf of the Board requesting input on areas that should be included in this Strategic Plan. James prepared a summary of those responses – see attached.

Share individual perspectives of major current events, conditions and movements that need to be considered as we move further into strategic planning (Board, DOE Leadership)

In a roundtable session, Board members and DOE staff members identified the following themes:

Themes

1. Traction – difference there has been since 2007:
 - Active outreach – AV, -SBE
 - Need to go to the people
2. Leadership – need balance of grassroots & a champion
3. Expectation that something is happening
 - must demonstrate action
 - reflect/respect relationships
4. Reach out to “rank and file”/general public
5. Evaluation – accountability
6. Student voice and involvement is integral
7. Economic downturn
 - governance
 - transformation
 - input connections made inside DOE
 - new norm
8. Web 2.0/technology – we need to get creative in how we use technology
9. Tie education community calling for action closely to this work
10. Commissioner continue to approve only new superintendents who support/are knowledgeable about Transformation
11. Full legislative communication plan by Fall 2009
12. Use existing resources & build cohesiveness – how can we sustain?
13. Public engagement
14. Legislative action
15. Teachers need to understand personal and professional role in “T”
16. How do we ID good leadership models
17. Involve parents
18. Capacity of DOE? Statewide? How to bring together? Reasonable timeline
19. VSBPE has Strategic Plan
 - continuum of career-long PD
 - % of turnover of Vermont-trained teachers
 - mentorship/career ladder
 - Cross-cultural competency standards
 - understanding student differences
 - VT NEA support
20. Communication – need to move toward what is happening
21. Policy Commission – public engagement
22. Stakeholder Plan (PR) – inclusion
23. Evaluation & sustainability of the plan
 - a. Creative entrance opportunities
24. Intentional systemic plan for engagement and action
25. SBE/Policy Commission – build communication & awareness
26. Accountability – testing & standards don’t assure it...governance
 - a. Support from field is growing – need tangible ways to engage
27. “Leaving the station” implies there is a single track – need a variety of “vehicles” & engage those who are doing transformative work

- a. DOE facilitate conversation
- 28. Moral courage because pressure will build to maintain status quo
- 29. Find balance of pressure and support
- 30. VCTE – take advantage of their research ability and willingness

Additions:

- 30. Don't rely on the development of personalized learning and engaging students in this learning – this must be approached from multiple directions using a variety of strategies
- 31. Communication plan = engaging and building from all facets.

Recess for the Day

Tuesday, June 23

Item K2: Update: Transformation of Education (Bill Romond; Kay Charron; Tom James)

Bill Romond and Kay Charron updated Board members on recent events around the Transformation initiative, focusing on areas that can move the initiative ahead significantly:

- *Statewide system of school support – relevance to capacity; means and methods to engage partners
- * Broad-based support – engaging beyond the education community (those people who have not been engaged before)
- *Moral courage
- *Using technology – Web 2.0 – interaction
- *Balance between pressure and requirements vs. incentives.

NB: See handout attached.

Jill Remick, Communications Director, spoke about enhanced communication efforts designed to expand knowledge, engagement and involvement.

- *DOE staff using multiple tools → direct access to teachers
- *Working to engage more partners
- *Transformation conversation is all around
- *Governance/consolidation conversation as a result of economic situation
- *Weekly Field Memo – better technology; effort underway to get teachers to self-subscribe
- *Desired Contacts: County Fairs; Public Access TV; school district personnel; Using Facebook;
- *S&A/LL – Poverty Gap Survey (goodwill created)
- *Blog being developed

Kay Charron reported on the June 22 Policy Commission meeting, which is now meeting primarily in sub-committees on specific areas. She reviewed the summary document from the previous day's meeting (see attached)

Policy Commission recommendations:

- *Build common vision
- *Engaging Partners/Outside entities (VCRD)
- *Policy Actions:
 - Establish a goal of policy within the transformation framework
 - 20th C → 21st C Practice

Student Outcomes

Responsibility for implementation at the school level – attach timelines, benchmark years

School Quality Reviews (SQS within the context of transformation structure)

Specific Policy Recommendations

*Support and getting partners to do some of the work

6/9 leadership meeting follow-up: 3 future meetings focusing on a common topic – actions to be taken (Kathy – SBE involvement)

*Broader context than just the work of the Policy Commission

Policy Commission:

Board members commented on 1) having the courage to say that this a starting point while it is evolving; 2) looking at failures and success of previous efforts and learning from those; 3) this is a compass for change, not a blueprint (not prescriptive); 4) Board is prepared to show that it has the moral courage to stick with this initiative.

*Secondary Transformation:

NESSC work continues; Connecticut possibly joining the mix

3 secondary development grants: Vergennes, Harwood, Mt. Anthony

*DOE Capacity:

Using the strategic plan, redefine and realign work to work more collaboratively around transformation

Think Tanks (PLCs in evolution)

TAG

Budget: re-engineering current \$\$ to move Transformation ahead

*Evaluation and Accountability:

Identify and implement performance indicators (within a transformative culture)

NGA Work on national standards has the potential to be supportive (fewer, deeper) of Transformation initiative; orient around 21C skills/context.

Item K3: Share thoughts and ideas about what should be considered in moving Transformation forward (Ray Proulx, facilitator)

1. School year/Day – structure of delivery
2. Statewide PD system
 - DOE lead/SBE priority setting
 - Identify key elements
 - Role for local action
 - Prescriptive? Enabling?
3. Leadership models – school based
4. Caution re prescription
5. Re-engaging with school boards
6. Work with VSBPE re new teacher standards
 - Work with institutions of higher education

7. Revisit legislation/definition of SBE strategic Plan
8. DOE as regulatory vs. support OR balance of the two
9. Consider how we create the entrepreneurial climate
Charters – quality control
10. Capacity
 - structures
 - Define goals/expectations and stick to them
 - Look at other supports (Gates, Nellie Mae, other sources of funding; Rowland fellows)
→ funding (stimulus \$\$ has opportunities)
 - Tie to economic development – get help w/ this (Snelling Institute?)
 - Take advantage of corporate assistance (for mentoring)
11. *Race to the Top* application
12. Work/build partnerships in a preK-16 way (All HE – state/public; private)
Use higher education's research support (VCTE)
13. Higher education admissions questions when students demonstrate learning in new ways
 - Coalition of Essential Schools
 - Home study students/parents
 - VSC
 - meetings/professional development with/for admissions counselors
 - Mutually develop high school assessments w/ admissions (Littleton, CO; CT, FL)
 - Alignment of High School Exit/College entrance
 - PreK-16 Council as a vehicle
14. Visual that represents connections embedded in strategic plan
15. Finance of education system: (Tie this idea to the transformation initiative)
 - impediment?
 - ID and advocate for particular transformative changes
 - piecemeal approaches/leverage points?
 - \$\$ follow student?

John H: transformation on a cost basis (neutral)
16. Sustain and retain key personnel at the DOE

Item K4: Fine tune current Strategic Plan (Ray facilitates)

- Identify completed items
- Delete items no longer considered as needed
- Identify important areas that need to be sustained

Goal I: Support (Promote, achieve – active language) high-quality, innovative instruction to improve student achievement; STUDENTS

**Re-write, re-examine to align with transformation (Transformation umbrella)*

Objectives:

D: *out – re-write to address insuring standards around T*

C: *influence of 21C skills*

E: *interplay with VSBPE; re-write: prepared to teach in the current environment; highly qualified, exhibiting good practice*

A: *“Each” student*

Goal II: Provide and promote high-quality educational leadership

**re-write to reflect Transformation*

**In one of the objectives, include language about “providing opportunities for”*

**More specificity in the language of the objectives*

Goal III: Promote safe and positive learning environments

**re-word to reflect: all students can learn, adversity*

**More specificity in the language to reflect transformation and to address increased diversity;*

Objectives:

**need to be re-written;*

** include language on alternative language environments*

**Re-frame goal around learning needs of all students*

**Bring “parents” the forefront in language*

Goal IV: Build department capacity to best support external needs

Remove: Part of implementation plan

Possibly an objective under one of the other goals: under leadership?

Goal V: Practice and promote effective use of all resources

Remove: part of implementation plan

Include concepts in other areas

Item K5: Establish a blueprint for developing the 2009-14 Strategic Plan

(Refer back to Don C’s comment from Monday)

Endorse a mission statement

Agreed up mission statement: The State Board of Education and Department of Education provide leadership to ensure that the Vermont education system gives each learner the opportunity to succeed in the 21st century.

Clarification: Mission - where to go/what you are doing;

Vision – how to get there

Identify (new) goal areas

New goal: Communication/public engagement/ building partnerships/Expand (beyond the usual suspects (share a universal ownership)

Policy Commission work/recommendations

New Goal: Insure that policies and procedures are in place to support Transformation

Establish a coherent policy structure to advance Transformation

Objectives in policy action section

Policies and procedures in place that further Transformation

Impediments are removed

Commission’s work is to make it happen

Determine method/process for creating the Strategic Plan

Decision Point:

- Board Work
- D.O.E.
- Internal Committee
- External Committee
- Other

Decision: SBE and DOE staff committee to address the development of the 5 Goals

- Form (5) sub-groups (of 5-6) to address each of the goals:
 - *3-5 objectives for each goal;
 - *Strategies should prescribe that direction but not the action steps
 - *Indicators of Progress for measuring
 - >Understand the current state and establish the future state

Establish charge to planners

Create a strategic plan (including reviewed Roles and Responsibilities) that builds Vermont's educational capacity through a statewide system of school support that (or resulting in) improves/d learning for all students.

Establish Timeline

Objective: By March 2010, Strategic Plan developed and ready for adopting and distribution.

Public Engagement Meetings

Public engagement throughout the process
Partnering organizations
Community members
Business members
School Board members, parents, students
Lawmakers
Governor's office

Item L: Wrap Up and Adjourn

Motion: At 2:50 p.m., Kathy Larsen moved, seconded by Fayneese Miller, to adjourn the June 22-23 meeting of the State Board of Education The motion passed unanimously (8-0).

Minutes prepared by Carol King

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June 22, 2009

Tess came on the board in 2007 and attended her first meeting in Killington. It was our planning meeting and when we initiated the Transformation of Education in Vermont. I recall the evening before the session started, and going to dinner with several board members. Tess was wide eyed and excited about joining the Board. She immediately asked questions, showing no fear.

Tess has been an enthusiastic and participating member of our Board. She is thoughtful and engaging in her participation with the Board as many different subjects are discussed. Her participation has grown as her experience has increased as well as her depth of knowledge. She has exhibited empathy and common sense when personnel issues are on the table for discussion. She has been a quick study as new issues came before the Board.

Tess also exhibits a positive attitude and good humor. I believe she will be a success in her future endeavors and will be an asset to any organization to which she becomes a part. So, as you move on to more exciting activities we wish you well and good fortune.

Tom James, Chair
State Board of Education

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**STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501**

**Resolution to Honor Bill Romond on the Occasion of His Retirement from the
Department of Education**

Whereas, hailing from the Garden State, you had a long, distinguished tenure teaching science and technology in Colchester's schools, and received a 1988 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching. You fostered students' scientific inquiry through technology in class and in the field, leading them on excursions to Lake Champlain, Belize and the Bahamas;

In 1998, you joined the Vermont Institute for Science, Math, and Technology, serving as Director of Information Technology Planning and writing the first State Technology Plan. You were instrumental in forming and leading (as its first president) the Vermont Information Technology Association for the Advancement of Learning (VITA-Learn), a leader in fostering the development and seamless integration of technology by Vermont's students and educators;

You began working with the Department in 2001, serving as the first Education Technology Coordinator. You have played major roles in bringing "online" and supporting state and federal initiatives and organizations. A brief sampling: the Learning Network of Vermont, Riverdeep Learning Village, Vermont Data Consortium, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Vermont Design and Technology Evaluation Association (keynote, May 2009), the Vermont Classroom Observation Tool, and Pathways to Math Achievement;

In 2007, blending strong technology skills and understanding of students' experiences, you were the keynote speaker for the Vermont School Counselor Association ("School Counseling in a Digital Age"), offering commentary on the meaning and value of technological change in students' lives. You are a 1999 alumnus of the Snelling Center's Vermont School Leadership Project;

In January 2008, you became the Department's Coordinator of Secondary Transformation; you have been an active leader in the path-breaking New England Secondary School Consortium (Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont);

When Bill Talbott became Acting Commissioner in January 2008, he appointed you Deputy Commissioner for Transformation. In the past 18 months, you have shepherded the major strands of this important work, helping to create guiding documents, forming essential groups (the Transformation Action Group and the Transformation Policy Council), and reaching out to schools, educational organizations, and other leaders. You are both champion and holder of the transformation vision, and, widely respected among Vermont's educators, are a sensitive, skilled facilitator of change, when the Department itself is moving through significant change;

While your professional competence and commitment have been sustained and effective, we equally recall and honor the personal qualities and character you have shown in your time with us. Your visionary thinking, close listening, collaborative work approach, open communication, and commitment to egalitarian work practices are legendary within the community of educators. You are universally respected as a thoughtful leader, whose commitments and abilities are complemented by humility and modesty, enduring qualities which bring out the best in others;

Educator, administrator, civic leader (Chair, Colchester Water Quality Committee), highly motivated and skilled tennis player (reaching for presence at the four Grand Slam sites), gentleman, brother of distinguished educator, Brother James L. Romond, spouse of Nancy (who shares your passion for the netted court), you are also parent of Laena (whose skills with horses you deeply admire) and Josh, who is co-parent with Amanda of Ella, born in February. Ella, a force at an early age, was an inspiration for you to ponder what life could offer beyond the Department. Given these talents and qualities, you are a 21st century Renaissance man!

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we salute your accomplishments and exceptional personal qualities. We are confident that, as you leave the Department, still a young man and proud owner of Nancy's fine gift, the restored 1976, British racing green TR-6 (successor to the TR-6 that drove you 'away' on your 1977 honeymoon), you will bring commitment, skills, compassion, humor, and intelligence to whatever enterprises draw your attention in the years ahead.

For the State Board of Education, Tom James, Chair
Montpelier, Vermont, June 22, 2009

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Education Transformation Policy Framework

Section 1: Education Transformation as Public Policy

- There is a growing need for education to transform itself.
 - The 21st century world is expanding and redefining the knowledge and skill demands today's students must acquire for success beyond high school.
 - Too large a portion of Vermont learners are failing to achieve these core 21st century knowledge and skills both because our schools have not modernized what they teach or have not changed how they teach so all students can learn at high levels.

- The rising costs of education in a declining economy and in a period of shrinking school enrollments are forcing new approaches to current practices.
- Therefore, Vermont’s public education system shall fundamentally and comprehensively transform its policies and practices so that all students, regardless of personal demographics and life experience, shall fully achieve the rigorous learning expectations essential for success in college, careers, and citizenship. All students shall have the personalized learning opportunities and support they need to be engaged and successful in their learning and develop the strong information literacy, technology, and critical thinking skills to enable them to be active, self-directed learners throughout their lives.
- By 20??, every public school shall have transformed its policies and practices to those broadly recognized as fundamental for quality education in the 21st century. While different schools are at different stages of fully implementing 21st century practices, each public school shall complete systemic transformation in each of the following areas:

| 20th Century Practice | 21st Century Practice |
|--|---|
| Time based learning with annual grade level promotions by age group; time is the constant | Standards and performance based learning system where students progress through proficiency levels for standards as they demonstrate mastery; time is the variable |
| “bell shaped curve” paradigm for student performance | “all students can learn” paradigm that expects all students to attain mastery of rigorous learning standards when provided with effective learning opportunities |
| Content standards define the breadth of what students should know in each subject discipline | Re-engineered 21 st century learning expectations that are “fewer, higher, deeper” to focus on essential knowledge and skills in depth, the application of knowledge and skills to real world tasks, and emphasize cross discipline competencies and higher order thinking |
| Teacher centered curriculum and classroom instruction | Personalized learning opportunities in flexible learning environments, often beyond school walls, that honor individual interests, goals, and natural differences in how each student learns; adaptive pedagogy and differentiated instruction |
| Teacher as keeper of knowledge – Student as recipient of knowledge | Teacher as facilitator of learning – student as worker and agent of own learning (engaged in in-depth research and taking meaningful actions on relevant, real world problems/projects) |
| Separation of subject areas | Interdisciplinary learning coherence |
| Short term, on-demand learning | In-depth intellectual work over time (multiple courses/multiple years); opportunity to revise and improve quality to reach mastery |
| On-demand “right answer” testing of | Complex, open ended performance assessments where |

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| content acquisition; teacher sets the bar for how good is good enough | students can demonstrate integration and application of knowledge in various contexts with many opportunities to revise and improve quality of work over time; bar for how good is good enough set by external work expectations |
| Teachers work primarily in isolation with limited authority over schedules, resources, curriculum, instruction, and assessments | Teachers work primarily in collaboration with other teachers working with common students; teachers have collective authority over wide range of system variables that impact design of learning opportunities |
| | |

Section 2: Student Outcomes Resulting from Transformation

- By 20??, every public school shall use a combination of valid and reliable state and local assessments to demonstrate attainment of the performance targets listed below:
 - 95% of all Vermont PK-12 students will achieve or exceed re-engineered 21st century learning standards in core academic subject areas (i.e. reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies) and in interdisciplinary skill areas (e.g. information & communication literacy and technologies; critical thinking; inquiry and research; creativity and innovation; leadership and collaboration; economics & entrepreneurship.)
 - Socioeconomic and gender based achievement gaps shall not exceed 5% in any academic performance measure and key student outcome measure (e.g. graduation rate; college entry rate; % in remediation courses; college persistence rate) defined by the Department of Education
 - 95% of students report on a state survey that their learning experiences are relevant and engaging and that their teachers hold high expectations for their performance and support them to achieve

Section 3: School as Unit of Transformation

- By 20??, each school shall draft and submit an evidenced based plan for transformation that will enable it to demonstrate benchmarked progress in years 20?? and 20??. Specific requirements for school transformation plans and acceptable ways to demonstrate attainment of outcomes and quality school practices will be defined by the Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner of Education will approve each school's plan for transformation.

Each PK-12 public school acts as its own **agent of change** to redesign learning goals, learning opportunities, and learning environments so that all students can succeed in college, careers, and citizenship in the 21st century. Each school is responsible and accountable for demonstrating their strategies and their transformation progress toward 21st century education excellence. No two transformed schools need to look alike. Transformation is not a cookie cutter process. Schools are transformed as teachers modify their teaching practices and schools redesign their structures and procedures to support more effective teaching and learning and increased student achievement.

Section 4: School Quality Reviews

The policy commission has not yet defined specific content for policy in this area. However, they have agreed that some form of school quality reviews will be an important tool for both monitoring and guiding school progress in the transformation. They intend to completely revise Vermont's School Quality Standards so they are more outcomes focused and align with the vision for 21st century practice. They have also just begun exploring various options for the structure of such a review process and the roles of various players. This fits with their strong beliefs that schools are the unit of transformation.

Section 5: Specific Policy Recommendations

Vermont needs a coherent policy structure where individual state and local policies are designed to be interdependent and reinforcing to support ongoing progress toward truly systemic transformation of education for the 21st century. But public policy is a crude instrument and therefore it should offer a compass for change but not prescribe a blueprint for change. Policies should establish clear parameters for change while delegating strategic and technical enactment of the policy to teachers and schools. Effective education policy must foster front line inventiveness. Below is a list of specific policies, designed to act in concert with the above policy framework, that the policy commission is currently exploring.

○ Educator Quality

- Educator professional development system
- Educator induction and mentor program
- Educator pre-service preparation programs
- Educator professional standards for 21st century and evaluation methods
- Educator career ladders

○ Learning Expectations

- Review Vermont Framework and revise into 21st century learning expectations for all students to be fully prepared for college, career, and citizenship in a global economy
- Tracking individual student proficiency against the learning expectations
- Performance based assessments
- Proficiency based grading and graduation requirements
- College readiness and early college options
- Revise school quality standards and review process
- Educator licensing

○ **Shared Accountability**

- Revised school quality standards; more holistic accountability measures
- Partnerships with higher education
- Tracking and supporting individual student achievement
- School designs for shared accountability
- Data systems and processes for shared accountability

○ **Teaching and Learning Practices**

- Proficiency based, ungraded structure
- Differentiated, personalized learning
- Flexible learning environments
- Multiple facilitators of learning
- Movement away from school as center of learning
- Learner friendlier governance structures enabling broader and more accessible options

○ **Personalized Learning**

- School designs that support personalization
- Flexible learning environments relevant to student interests, goals, and needs
- Dual enrollment and early college options
- Individual student learning tracked against learning expectations so both student and teachers always know current skill level and development needs
- Tiered supports for students, including literacy supports,

○ **Systems and Structures**

- School accountability measures
- Role and function of school boards
- School choice/ charter schools
- Governance - consolidation
- Education funding
- Staffing patterns and teaching assignments
- School calendar/schedule
- Statewide professional development system
- School quality review process
- Regional school networks

Transformation Update

June 23, 2009

Major Themes:

1. How to make the work of the DOE that which builds Vermont's educational capacity through a statewide system of school support resulting in improved learning for all students.
2. Broad-based and deep community support of a common vision for Transformation is required. The work has only begun.
3. As transformational changes begin to affect Vermont's system, we must exhibit the moral courage needed to maintain the vision.
4. We must think of and use technology differently. It can be the facilitating tool for transformation, allowing us to communicate, analyze, and manage our work in ways we never could have in the past.
5. Be conscious of the need for both bringing some pressure to change along with support for change.

| Factor | History/Current Status | Future Work |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Build Common Vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>07 – 09</u> - Transformation documents from SBE/DOE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “How Are the Children?” - “Transformation of Education” - “Transformation of Education – A Primer” ● <u>07-08</u> - Broad stakeholder input/testimony to SBE ● <u>08-09</u> - DOE staff discussions re: transformation with broad range of organizations (e.g. VPA; VSA; VCTE; higher education; ESA's; schools; business; legislature) ● <u>Sept 08</u> - Transformation Summit - culminating in a descriptive narrative of transformed education in VT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce document describing what key transformation concepts look like/mean for schools (i.e. personalization; flexible learning environments; active learning) ● Spotlight transformed practices in Vermont schools (e.g. videos; school visits; “news” releases) ● Develop a self assessment tool for schools to reflect on where they are in transforming and plan next steps ● Implement Transformation blog ● Build broader/deeper conversation with non-education community. Engage with entity to do so (VCRD, Snelling?) |
| Engage Partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Jan 09</u> – Summit follow-up ● <u>June 09</u> – Leadership/System Change conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow up 6/09 leadership session with 3 more targeted to specific collaborative strategies |

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| | <p>with professional development providers to ID strengths, gaps, resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Dec 08</u> – current – Meet with Asst groups (VCTE, 2 ESA's, VSBPE, others) re: their role in implementing transformation ● <u>Jan 09</u> – current – Commissioner meetings with Rotary groups, SU Boards, Educational Leadership Organizations to promote transformation ● <u>Jan 09</u> – current – Engaging with media to continue to promote Transformation vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broaden discussions with partner organization re: their roles in implementation and formalize agreements ● Support partners through revenue streams and grant opportunities ● Highlight examples, islands of excellence at State Board Meetings, in Field Memo, and Transformation Blog ● Continue Commissioner meetings, speeches, editorial pieces, media appearances ● Plan how to and then engage schools and supervisory unions as key implementation partners |
| Policy Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Apr-Dec 08</u> - Build matrix of key DOE policies that leverage or prevent transformation (Focus mostly SQS) ● <u>Dec 08</u> - Agreement that identifying roadblocks not adequate - SBE creates policy commission w/recommendations to SBE by 10/09 ● <u>Mar 09</u> - Policy Commission meets 2X/month = 7 mtg ● <u>Jun 09</u> - Commission prioritized 6 high leverage policy areas w/accompanying specific policy agendas ● <u>Jun 09</u> - Linda Darling Hammond addresses Commission on policy priorities. Consistency noted between Commission priorities with LDH. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete policy commission work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete policy development and draft language ○ Commission broadly solicits reactions/input ○ Commission finalizes and presents to SBE ● Staff review of commission recommendations, NESSC policy findings, and review of existing VT policies. ● Staff input and suggestions to SBE in their review of commission recommendations ● SBE sets policy priorities re Transformation Act 2010 ● In consultation with bill writer from legislature, staff drafts language for the Transformation Act 2010 ● SBE submits to legislature ● Joint House/Senate Education Committees presentation ● Ongoing tracking and testimony throughout the legislative session, including individual legislator meetings and coordination with other key stakeholders ● Prepare for Administrative Rules modifications to ensure policy coherence; initiate and complete Rules process ● Work with VSA, VPA, VSBA, and local districts regarding strengthening local policy to advance transformation |

Secondary Transformation

- 08 - Developed research-based VT secondary transformation model
- 08 - Solicited reactions from superintendents and principals
- 07 – 09 Initiated the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) with ME, NH, RI
 - Nellie Mae/Gates Grant
 - Governor announcement
 - VT NESSC Advisory Council
 - Focus on: Policy Review across 4 states, international best practices re educator quality; teaching & learning practices; learning standards and student assessments; data and evaluation
 - Communications to advance secondary transformation (logo; website; message campaign)
 - Research 21st century learning standards and performance based assessments
 - \$30,000 dedicated for VT use; State Liaison (Amy Cole)
- Oct 08 - Awarded 3 \$50,000 secondary transformation grants (Vergennes; Harwood; Bennington) focused on transformative instructional practices
- Nov 08 - Conducted Secondary Transformation Conference @ Lake Morey
- Jan-Apr 09 - Held 5 regional follow-up meetings to promote deeper understanding of ST model; seek input on types of supports desired by field
- Jan 09 - Instituted a secondary transformation list serve to share resources, information, and solicit input
- Secure substantive funding to support and implement secondary transformation efforts such as:
 - Grants to support demonstration schools engaged in transformation work here in Vermont
 - Design and establish a Secondary School Transformative Leadership Academy
 - In collaboration with others, establish and operate a skilled secondary school coaching team
- Plan and conduct 2 secondary transformation conferences open to all schools during 09/10 school year
- Draft and release a paper describing international best practices in secondary schools
- Design and establish accountability mechanisms to track individual secondary school progress toward transformation and provide feedback and support
- Continue NESSC participation in regional work that benefits VT efforts
- Continue Secondary School list serve to share information and resources on secondary transformation and participate in DOE's Transformation blog
- Facilitate "school visit" trips for interested secondary leaders to observe transformed schools in operation

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| DOE Capacity, Resources, and Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Sep 07</u> - Created the Secondary Transformation Team as focal point for leading this initiative • <u>May 08</u> - Created a Deputy Commissioner of Transformation to lead and coordinate state efforts and internal DOE efforts • <u>Jun 08</u> - Created the Transformation Action Group as focal point for planning and coordinating DOE transformation efforts • <u>Sep 08</u> - Created DOE Think Tank groups to build cross department sharing and common understanding of transformation • <u>Apr 09</u> - Internal sharing and discussion of transformation vision and how individual work efforts align with it (e.g. RTI; EST; School Improvement) • <u>Apr 09</u> - Initial discussions on how to make better use of ARRA and grant monies we award to schools to advance transformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish funding for transformation work in DOE budget • Develop Think Tanks further in order to give staff members voice in transformation efforts, develop common language and knowledge for executing state level transformation projects • Re-define job roles within DOE as needed to build a system of school supports that can expand local capacity of schools and supervisory unions to advance transformation • Develop specific goals and work tasks for advancing transformation, with clear lines of coordination and accountability • Coordinate all school grant expectations to advance transformation; seek waivers as needed to maximize use of available funds • Creation of Transformation Blog site, hosting news articles, spotlights on schools, transformational teachers, examples of transformation in action, videos from students, video commentary by Commissioner |
| Evaluation & Accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this point little has been done to evaluate whether and/or how progress is being made | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify performance indicators for DOE work and for schools • Collect baseline information to know where we are now • Re-engineer existing DOE system based on needs • Monitor and track progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DOE work ○ School capacity changes ○ Incentives/sanctions required |